THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments wherein the Central Government is responsible for procurement of foodgrains (Rice & Wheat), storage and their transportation upto the Principal Distribution Centres of FCI and the State Governments are responsible for identification of beneficiaries, issue them ration cards and distribute foodgrains through a vast net work of 4.83 lakh Fair Price Shops scattered all over the country. In such a vast net-work chances of irregularities can not be ruled out. However whenever a complaint is received by the Central Government it is forwarded to the concerned State Government for investigations and necessary remedial action.

(c) The reform of the Public Distribution System to improve its efficiency, accountability and effectiveness is an ongoing process. Besides notification of the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, model citizen's charter and deputation of task force teams to check irregularities and to inspect and monitor the TPDS and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, conferences of State Food Secretaries, State Food Ministers, meeting with All India Fair Price Shops Dealers Federation and a meeting with all the Members of Parliament was organized for strengthening of TPDS and to make th system more successful. Regional Conferences have been held with focus on the unique problems of the region and to facilitate strengthening of the TPDS in a manner, which may be relevant to the local environment. Innovative steps like issue of bar-coded coupons, involvement of self-help groups, particularly of women, setting up of vigilance committees at FPS level have been adopted by various state governments to ensure correct distribution of foodgrains.

Foodgrains stocks

1224. SHRI A. VAJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrain stocks fell down drastically during the year 2002 to the year, 2005;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the quantity of foodgrain stocks during the year 2002 to 2006 year-wise, foodgrain-wise and category-wise;

(c) whether the wheat stock dropped less than the buffer norms in January, 2006;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the steps taken to procure more foodgrains so as to maintain the stock above the buffer norms; and

(f) the steps taken so that the buffer stock of wheat does not become negative in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The total stock of foodgrains in the Central Pool *viz-a-viz* the buffer norms during the year 2002 to January, 2006 is given in the statement (*see* below).

The decline of foodgrains stocks has been, *inter-alia* due to following decisions taken by Government since March 2002 to liquidate the excess stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool.

(i) Increase in scale of allocation of foodgrains from 25 to 35 kgs per family per month for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families.

(ii) To fix the scale of allocation for Above Poverty Line (APL) families at 35 kgs per family per month.

(iii) To fix the scale of issue for all welfare institution and hostels uniformly @ 15 kg per head per month and make an additional allocation equal to 5% of BPL allocation to States/UTs at BPL rates.

(iv) Expansion of wage employment programmes such as Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) including Special Component of SGRY and National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP).

(v) To increase the coverage of AAY families from 1 crore to 2.5 crore in the three phases w.e.f. 5.6.2003, 3.8.2004 and 12.5.2005.

Apart from the above, the other reasons for decline in stocks have been export of foodgrains which continued upto November 2004 and the lower procurement of wheat during last year.

(c) and (d) The stock of wheat in the Central Pool as on 1.1.2006 was 61.88 lakh tonnes against buffer norm of 82.00 lakh tonnes. This was mainly due to shortfall in procurement of wheat by about 20 lakh tonnes in Rabi Marketing Season 2005-06 in Uttar Pradesh, and marginally in Haryana.

(e) and (f) The following steps have been taken to improve the stock position:-

(i) The target of procurement of foodgrains (Wheat and Rice) during Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2006-07 and Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2005-06 has been enhanced as under:

   (a) Procurement of about 162 lakh tonnes of wheat during RMS 2006-07 as against 148 lakh tonnes of wheat procured during RMS 2005-06.

   (b) Procurement of about 260 lakh tonnes of Rice in KMS 2005-06 as against 246.5 lakh tonnes of Rice procured in KMS 2004-05.

(ii) The ratio of Rice and Wheat in the allocation of foodgrains to BPL and APL families under TPDS has been rationalized keeping in view the food habits of States/UTs.

(iii) The State Governments are encouraged to procure more coarsegrains and distribute the same under the TPDS/other schemes.

(iv) Decision to import 5 lakh tonnes of wheat.

(v) The allocation under Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Food for Work (NFFW) programmes has been reduced from 5 kg to 3 kg per person per day in the wage component w.e.f. 1.11.2005 to 31.3.2006 by Ministry of Rural Development.

Statement

Stock position of Wheat & Rice in the Central Pool vis-à-vis minimum buffer norms

(in lakh tonnes)

As on	Wheat		Rice		Total	
	Actual stock	Minimum buffer norms	Actual stock	Minimum buffer norms	Actual stock	Minimum buffer norms
1.1.2002	324.15	84.00	256.17	84.00	580.32	168.00
1.4.2002	260.39	40.00	249.12	118.00	509.51	158.00
1.7.2002	410.74	143.00	219.37	100.00	630.11	243.00
1.10.2002	356.37	116.00	157.70	65.00	514.07	181.00
1.1.2003	288.30	84.00	193.72	84.00	482.02	168.00
1.4.2003	156.45	40.00	171.57	118.00	328.02	158.00
1.7.2003	241.94	143.00	109.74	100.00	351.68	243.00
1.10.2003	184.27	116.00	52.41	65.00	236.68	181.00
1.1.2004	126.87	84.00	117.27	84.00	244.14	168.00
1.4.2004	69.31	40.00	130.69	118.00	200.00	158.00
1.7.2004	191.52	143.00	107.63	100.00	299.15	243.00
1.10.2004	142.23	116.00	60.92	65.00	203.15	181.00
1.1.2005	89.31	84.00	127.63	84.00	216.94	181.00
1.4.2005	40.66	40.00@	133.41	122.00@	174.07	162.00@
1.7.2005	144.54	171.00@	100.71	98.00@	245.25	269.00@
1.10.2005	102.90	110.00@	48.49	52.00@	151.39	162.00@
1.1.2006	61.8	82.00@	126.41	118.00@	188.29	200.00@

@New Buffer Norms w.e.f. 1.4.2005.

Subsidies on BPL items

1225. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the incidence of subsidies on items meant for Below Poverty Line (BPL) population in the country;